Proof read
by GJM Dec. 2000

G.J.M.

M2443
Sunday, September 1, 1974
BARN
Lunch

I hate to think how long it has been since I sat here. But you can always say you missed me, and I'll say the usual words, I like to be missed: so, here we are.

Yesterday I had a little talk with an ashram in Monroe. It didn't amount to very much. It was just a matter of telling them something about Gurdjieff. But I always am hesitant about such little affairs. I did it, of course, for Dr. [name unintelligible] (MISRA), not for the others. And then when I started, then two or three never heard of the name Gurdjieff- how do you spell it? And so forth. I start to question these kind of forms of, call them publicity. I must say that I have no interest (am absolutely I have no interest) whatsoever in that kind of talking. I have been asked several times to talk in Montreal or Washington or so, where there's a group of people all interested, so-called, in esoteric knowledge, so-called, and to stand there and to get up and give a little discussion about Gurdjieff which everybody if they want to read can find in any kind of book about Gurdjieff, is really utter nonsense. And then to tell them what is Work - and yesterday, I didn't want to mention, really, Work (what is), and then only in a very general way, and I even wanted to eliminate the word "I."

Because the audience, as such well-meaning and perhaps interested and a little curious, cannot take anything along for themselves because it's going to be put on the

same kind of shelf in their memory as many other people who know talk a little bit about spiritual life. And it made me think, you see, that we, as far as I am concerned, do not want to be associated with all the little nonsense that this [someone's name?] and a little magazine of East and West. Unfortunately, our name is mentioned in it for [certain things?] of my doing, but with all the clap-trap nonsense that you will find in that little bit of a sheet, I think it is quite ridiculous and also lowers Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff is not to be talked about in an ordinary way. It's not like anything else that we also do and have a little tea party about it. There is a very definite distinction between what Gurdjieff means and what he does and has said, what he has done and what he is still saying - that is a daily application of Work and understanding for oneself to wish to become more acquainted with what one is in reality and a gradual development of the spiritual aspects of life for oneself.

Of course you can say, "Why don't you read All and Everything?" and then help them a little by saying, "It's an impartial criticism." And then you can start to explain what is really meant by that, and there are always little questions of not only how do you spell his name; but what you really mean. And perhaps there is some interest. But in a very general way, I cannot count on any of that kind of interest even to be a little bit continuous, and I'm quite certain the next day it is forgotten, practically.

It made me think about the different aspects of this particular civilization in which we are now living and where it now becomes a little more fashionable to be able to talk intelligently, more or less at least, about

esoteric knowledge put in some kind of a form that it can be applied in one's ordinary life. Much of the junk that is being talked about is quite superficial. But at the same time, I wouldn't want to say you should not be in contact with it. But you must know what you can expect, and also verify that for yourself, and always, if you actually want to find out what Work means, and you believe in the possibilities of Gurdjieff and objectivity, you have to compare it with what this kind of a dogma represents in your life. There's no objection to go to other places to find out what they are talking about and how they say this and that and to what extent it will appear to you.

After all, you are the decisive factor about your own life, what you wish and what you think you need and you are entitled to go wherever you have to go to get it, provided you get it, you get something that is actually of use. But if it leads you to confusion, don't spend too much time in becoming more confused. Of course you might say why do I say that regarding Gurdjieff, even, that you have confusion. But gradually it will become clear. The simple reason is that it is based on the practical life you are now living. It's not based on a Sunday. It is based on something that you can do in your ordinary life so that you don't have to get out of the way of ordinary life in order to attend to your duties for meditation.

All of that is included. But you see, Ouspensky talks very clearly about the First and the Second and the Third Way: the fakir, the saint and yogi. And you must understand what takes place with you if you follow any one of those three. You develop a center - I wouldn't say immediately at the expense of the others. But at least the others don't get that attention that you give

to one. You become an expert, as far as your body is concerned, or your feelings or your mind. And then it ends up with the possibility of seeing certain things that actually are there of a higher level. Of course there's no denying that fact that esoteric knowledge is also given to you. But you end up being a little bit of a lop-sided kind of man, and that I think is a disadvantage because if you then see that the other two centers are not sufficiently developed, from our standpoint, you might say that the two centers remain unconscious and that one center becomes conscious on its own. Then of course the lop-sidedness throws you out of balance.

You see, what I like about Gurdjieff is his definition that he wants people as they are, personalities, to become manly; that he talks about harmonious Man, constantly emphasizing the necessity of what is a responsibility for a man on this earth; that he has that responsibility in order to the duty which is laid upon him since he appeared on this earth in a form of life; and a recognition of the necessity of maintaining that life in conditions where now the ordinary forms of behavior are dictated, as it were, by the outside world; and that in the midst of such culture, or civilization, it is possible for a person to continue to attend to what has to be done for the maintenance of his unconscious existence and at the same time, that he can develop his I and all the different attributes we ascribe to it: kesdjanian body and the soul body, which has to be made.

That is a tremendous advantage. Besides that, it's practical. It does not ascribe beautiful conditions, denying yourself certain things in order to gain something else that is of more value. It can be of more value. But if you deny

things that are naturally now your own, you may forget that it is a requirement to attend to that what you are naturally until naturally it will slough off, until naturally it will die, like your body will.

And therefore Gurdjieff is pragmatic. He is a teacher who knows life, and has talked about it in a variety of different ways and given different aspects of different people in All and Everything and in the stories of the remarkable men. And for that reason, that kind of philosophy, if you want to call it that way, or indications of religious conduct of one's life, Gurdjieff has a unique place among all the different other people that one knows about - unique in another sense that in All and Everything, all and everything is included, not just a little specialized sections of esotericism. And that of course you have to find out for yourself, because maybe in the beginning you don't really believe it.

But I would really like to remind you, you can find everything in All and Everything.

The only trouble is, you really don't find yourself until you start to Work. And then you will see what tremendous value that book can have for you in the simple application in your daily life, constantly being reminded of what ought to be, and then seeing yourself for whatever you are.

That is the reason I don't like to talk about these things to just ordinary people who are a little bit curious. I only want to talk about Gurdjieff with people who already know at least how you write his name, and at

a little bit that

least who know a little bit about an 'I', and who know at least there is Work to be done, and [redacted] also knows, who have already attempted, slightly, to do that.

In the beginning, I did talk to groups of people who didn't know very much, and for that [redacted] just to build up, you might call it, an organization. It was necessary to spread the word around. But for me, at the present time, that is over. There are more than enough tapes of that kind that can always be listened to if necessary. There are always enough books that can be read to get some information about Gurdjieff. If one wants to find out what Work means, it is very necessary to join a group or to talk to a few people who do know.

You see, the second advantage is that when there is a development in the sense of Gurdjieff, and we distinguish between a physical approach based on sensing, an emotional approach based on presence, and an intellectual approach based on the concept of objectivity, it doesn't matter what the approaches are. They all lead to a development of all three centers simultaneously, even if you want to apply to that what Gurdjieff has left in the sense of movements, in the sense of music and in the sense of writing All and Everything. Also, you can say, physical, emotional, or feeling, and intellectual approaches.

Every time there is something that can happen because of the attention you give to any one of those three particular activities, always the three centers become involved. You cannot have movements without music or rhythm.

You cannot have them without knowing what the body has to do. Your emotional center cannot be receptive only in your heart. It has to have an understanding in your mind. And sometimes, when it is the kind of music that really speaks, it speaks to your body, and your body becomes really vibrating as a result of the influence of the music . And as far as the intellectual approach is concerned, of course it's so obvious. You have a certain thought in your mind about wish to Work. It may be that the thought is preceded by the wish. In any event, it starts then, intellectually, in a certain concept. And there is no difficulty about assuming, and also registering, and also experiencing a certain something taking place in the mind and the brain in a very definite way, that it becomes active in a section above the temples which are virgin fields for the development of an objective faculty.

When that is there, that is when one says, here, this 'I' is now playing its part or doing its best, even from the imagination period or going over into the actuality of an existence as a reality. Then it is an observation of the movements of the physical body or the activity of the body itself, and then the constancy of the wish, which has to be there, forms the triangle of intellectual approach in Work.

All three centers remain represented, all three centers profit by whatever method you follow. And as a result, no center is left out. They will equally, or in relation to each other, in harmony develop with each other, I call it, simultaneously. So that then the balance between the centers continues in the form of a balance of three bodies, so that then a harmonious man is, because of that education, is a man in balance, and the result is he is in

peace. And moreover, when you see that it is necessary to straighten out the difficulties between the mind and feeling, that on the basis of consciousness and conscience, there is no further question about cooperation.

Now, you see, these kind of ideas and concepts you don't find so easily somewhere else. You will find a little bit here and little bit there. It's not up to me to find out who and what and so forth. That is your affair. You investigate, whatever you wish, in whatever direction you want to go. And then you have to be honest: what is it that Gurdjieff can give you that the others do not give you?

Of course, that puts the accent on what you wish. If your desire is to remain as superficial as you can be; if you don't want to be come involved emotionally to the depths of your emotion; if you don't want to consider the possibility of an essentiality in your life; if you don't want to consider the possibility of something existing that is already like an image of God within you; then, logically, you will be satisfied with just a little bit of butter that you put on a piece of bread. And if that is all, and if it helps you in ordinary life, go to it, and do whatever you wish to do with your body and your mind and your feelings. But it will not lead to become a harmonious man, in the eyes of the Lord.

Now I introduce that because that is really what counts. This whole question of Heaven as represented at the end - or the perfection of any religion - leading to God sitting in Heaven or Valhalla or on Mount Olympus, or wherever such spirits at the present time still are, all the different layers

in the universe as a whole indicating different degrees of development, like Theosophy talks about, whatever it may be: we talk about Heaven as an aim.

And then we say, in accordance with The Bible, wouldn't it be beautiful if we could bring Heaven down to earth, so that we could touch it? Because we are unbelieving Thomases not wanting to accept something that is being told as existing, without being able to see it or to feel it or to be in contact with it or to recognize it as an experience. And that, I think again, is the advantage of Gurdjieff.

When he talks about an 'I', when he talks about representation of 'I', of God, then giving that what is necessary for mankind in the form of an application and an understanding of Work, then one is in touch, on the one hand, with oneself as a possibility of further development and considering oneself as a means to reach Heaven; and, on the other hand, having brought down to earth, to oneself, to be present, to have with one something as a guide telling you what to do and what not to do and how to do it: these are the things that come down when one says, "I wish to Work."

And then this 'I'- I've called it many times 'Christ' - it is something that gives you deliverance from yourself, that actually makes within yourself an atonement. That is, 'to become one', which means harmonious, in balance. And this Christ is the method, as given, of how to Work on yourself, and enunciated by the man and personality, Jesus, who because of living that what he claimed to give, became the Son of God.

And so I feel that regarding Gurdjieff. And when one wishes to bring Heaven on earth that the only way you can do it is to take the understanding of yourself as much as you have capacity and put it in your heart. Then Heaven is within. There is the response to that kind of attempt that you do make which really precedes devotion for the sake of satisfying the responsibility of yourself and your wish to develop to become a Man. That particular response is in that what is indelibly ingrained in any person and stays with him throughout this life and any other life. We call that, simply, magnetic center in order to indicate a magnetism that proceeds from that so that 'I', wishing this Heaven to be within me, is attracted by that kind of entity to become real.

To understand that reality, and in the sense of that reality, understanding the freedom which is needed, we've talked about it enough, I've called it this little magnetic center in which all dimensions have ceased to exist. And quite definitely that means one must leave the periphery. One must go through the particular, essential forms. One must try to find what is the reality of essence.

And Gurdjieff gives that. He gives you, in your daily life, symbolized by the activities of this Barn, symbolized by meetings when we talk about Work, symbolized by the way you behave and live, by the way you are and can be and could remain interested in the possibility of a development which is worth much and much more than your ordinary life and unconsciousness could give you. That is the reason we talk about that. That is the reason we have this as a group.

I say, as a group. I want to emphasize that more and more, because if there is actually a group, not just a few people who hang around and are loose ends without any connection between them, only a nice little chatter, but if there is something, sometimes represented by one person, who puts his caché on such a group, but then when he goes, what has he done then to continue? Because it is obvious that anyone who wants to teach and to try to communicate, that he must leave after him a legacy. When Gurdjieff was unable to fulfill his aim with the Prieuré because of his accident, he didn't sit down and say it's just too damn bad.

When he was still in a coma, practically, right after his accident, he started to dictate All and Everything in its pristine form, just about seventy pages of that, dictating it, at that time, to Madame de Hartmann who took it down - and fortunately I have a copy of that kind of dictation. It is not known to people, but in that, there is an outline of what he intended to do, forcing himself to become an author, instead of "a teacher of dancing".

This is what I mean: a person who takes on himself the responsibility of communicating and to wish to introduce or to continue to encourage the possibility of further growth, has a very definite responsibility to see that this kind of idea can continue even if he has to leave this earth. And I am in that kind of a boat.

That is why I talk about it, so that you can face that particular issue and don't make any nonsense about it. That is going to happen. When, nobody

knows. I don't. If I would know, I would tell you. But in the meantime, I live, day by day, constantly considering what is right for this group, to become more cemented, to have more cooperation, to have cohesion among us, to eliminate the different, little bits of nonsense that we talk about once in a while, and the little bit of getting into each other's hair. To see if we can create among many of us a regular nucleus- I call it mesoteric, but of course having an aim that it should become much, much more esoteric in that particular application and in the wish to have solidity within themselves so that on the basis of that, they can recognize each other even if it is difficult to see that when they behave unconsciously.

That is the aim I feel I have in mind. I have been reminded many times of that when, because of certain circumstances, I couldn't be here and I couldn't be enough, even, as the Barn itself. But I hope that is now over. I hope that we can again pick up where we left off. [~~Very hard? Yes~~] That the good intentions can be fulfilled, with your help. You must understand that, because, again: it is not an open door. It is not that I am just available for anyone. You see, I have a life to live this time. It is not a period of about thirty years ago, where I could be everybody's friend. There is a wish, on my part, to be that, but there is a limit because of physical impossibility to attend to everybody who would like to see me.

I have explained it several times. There's no use going any further into that. Please recognize that I have my own life to live, that I have a very definite obligation to myself and to what I've started, and I wish to continue with it, as well as one can, like I take, many times, a vow: May I die if I don't continue in doing that what I ought to do, honestly.

It's a vow you take, sometimes every day.

We learn how to take such promises as truthful to oneself, on birthdays. This month, Virgo, tremendous quantity of people with birthdays. Two are next to me. There are several, already, expecting to have their birthday. To all of the Virgos: make up your mind during September that either it is yes or no, regarding Gurdjieff. Make it so clear to yourself that you settle with a variety of different other influences, helpful as they may be, that their is something quite definite in the message of Gurdjieff, of objectivity explained to the Western world, and that you don't have to go unnecessarily visiting all kinds of other nice little countries and become devoted to some kind of a guru.

I have absolutely no kind of criticism about that. Don't misunderstand me. Gurdjieff can stand on his own feet. He does not need any help from anyone. He has given every one of us everything you have to know and everything you have to know in order to apply it in your life. All that is required on your part is sincerity, an honest wish to find out what is truth, simplicity in your behavior and quite clear about that what has to be done as Work on yourself.

I hope you can Work this afternoon. I hope you can find the Barn a suitable place. I hope you can overcome your impressions of others, those particularly you don't like. I hope you are willing to submit, every once in awhile to a little bit of difficulty indicated every once in awhile by too much friction going against the grain of your own little wishes and to do

things a little extraordinary for the sake of a further understanding which you would not get any other way.

This is the third reason why Gurdjieff is right. He does not stop at trifles. He continues to tell you to see the totality of you, so-called good and so-called bad. All of it, all your manifestations of your life, regardless. But he gives you a warning, that when you see it, please accept it, as a result, maybe, of mechanism, or of earth's conditions. And then it can be used by yourself for a different purpose which goes in the direction of Heaven.

You must understand your life, I think, much more. But you also have to learn how to express it in a very simple way. And so when you say, "I wish you a good year," you must know that the other person feels what you actually wish, and if in such a wish, there is a three-centered attemtp to be unified in front of a person you care for, then, without any question, such a wish will be understood and will be accepted, and will also have its influence on the person you congratulate.

If you drink to Gurdjieff, make it a wish from all three centers, for the sake of your own life.

To Gurdjieff.

Peter, will you please?

[Music follows] (it is on this tape)

END TAPE

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